

Best Management Practices

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION



Illinois chorus frog

Pseudacris streckeri illinoensis

Common name • Illinois chorus frog

Scientific name • *Pseudacris streckeri illinoensis*

State status • None at this time

Ecology

Illinois chorus frogs are found in west-central and southwestern Illinois, southeastern Missouri and northeastern Arkansas. In Missouri, they historically preferred flat, sand areas, but they now inhabit soybean and cotton fields. Illinois chorus frogs are the largest chorus frog, with large, muscular forelimbs. Their color may vary from light tan to tan-gray, with a distinct V-shaped marking between the eyes, a dark stripe from the snout to the shoulder and a dark spot below the eye. These frogs breed in late winter, usually late February through early April, in flooded fields, ditches or other temporary, fishless bodies of water. Tadpoles develop into frogs after about 60 days. Adults range in length from 1-1 inches. Illinois chorus frogs eat various small insects and possibly burrowing larvae.

Reasons for Decline

Illinois chorus frogs historically inhabited the former sand prairies of southeastern Missouri. However, as this unique habitat has been totally eliminated, so has much of the chorus frog population. In addition, continued draining and clearing of bottomlands in southeastern Missouri have greatly reduced breeding habitat of this species. It also is possible that increased exposure to herbicides and pesticides will cause further declines in populations of the Illinois chorus frog and other amphibians and reptiles.

Specific Recommendations

As do many amphibians, Illinois chorus frogs require different habitat conditions at different stages in their life cycle. From the time eggs are laid until the tadpoles develop into frogs, these amphibians require ephemeral pools. As adults, chorus frogs require loose, sandy soil. For these reasons, it is important to protect all bottomland and sand prairie habitat and ephemeral pools within the range of the Illinois chorus frog.

→ Draining or destroying known wetland habitat should be avoided.

→ Erosion and sediment controls should be strictly implemented, monitored and maintained for the duration of the project.

→ Avoid removing or destroying unique habitat features, such as downed trees, that provide habitat for reptiles and amphibians.

→ Avoid altering water levels and regimes in wetlands or seasonally flooded areas within the range of the Illinois chorus frog.

→ Disposal of wastes and garbage should be done in designated areas far from wetlands.

→ Avoid physically or chemically removing or altering the vegetation in the 100-foot buffer around wetlands or seasonally flooded areas.

General Recommendations

Refer to Management Recommendations for Construction Projects Affecting Missouri Streams and Rivers and Management Recommendations for Construction Projects Affecting Missouri Wetlands.

Information Contacts

For further information regarding regulations for development near wetlands and streams and rivers, contact:

Missouri Department of Conservation
Policy Coordination Section
P.O. Box 180
2901 W. Truman Blvd
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180
Telephone: 573/751-4115

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Division of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176
Telephone: 573/526-3315

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Regulatory Branch
700 Federal Building
Kansas City, MO 64106-2896
Telephone: 816/983-3990

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Water, Wetlands, and Pesticides Division
901 North 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101
Telephone: 913/551-7307

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Field Office
608 E. Cherry Street, Room 200
Columbia, MO 65201
Telephone: 573/876-1911

Disclaimer

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